

LOWER GREAT LAKES FISHERY RESOURCES OFFICE

MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT March 2001



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Betsy Trometer, Fishery Biologist
Mike Weimer, Fishery Biologist
Dan deRoos, Fish and Wildlife Biologist

Volunteers

Kaitlin McCormick, Anna Kong, Leslie Jacobs

FISH AND WILDLIFE ACTIVITIES

Lake Sturgeon Restoration

Chris L. observed techniques used to determine sex and state of maturity of sturgeon using a fiberoptic microscope at the USGS-Silvio Conte Laboratory (3/12). The LGLFRO will be employing this technique eliminating the need to perform surgery.

Chris L. presented an overview of the Niagara River lake sturgeon project at the Lake Ontario State-of-the-Lake public meeting (3/14).

Chris L. and Jeff attended a Genesee River lake sturgeon research project meeting with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), USGS, Kodak, and Rochester Gas and Electric (RG&E) (3/20). Current results and plans for 2001, particularly outreach efforts were discussed. RG&E and Kodak will be leading the local public education and outreach component of the project.

Mike S. constructed a gill net guide ramp at the Town of Lewiston Water Pollution Control Center with help from Tim Sullivan an employee of the center.

GREAT LAKES BASIN ECOSYSTEM TEAM

Chris L., in cooperation with Bernie May (UC Davis - lake sturgeon geneticist) prepared a full proposal to the Great Lakes Fishery Trust for a project entitled, *Development of a Management Plan for Lake Sturgeon within the Great Lakes Basin based on Population Genetic Structure*.

Chris L. also received a request for a full proposal to the Great Lakes Fishery Trust for a project entitled, *Annual Lake Sturgeon Coordination Meeting*, to be administered by the Lake Sturgeon Committee. Henry Quinlan (Ashland FRO) completed the full proposal with assistance from Chris.

LAKE ERIE

Betsy summarized the data collected during the 2000 Lake Erie lower trophic level assessment program for the Lake Erie Committee's Forage Task Group Annual Report. Betsy also summarized data collected on Lake Erie burbot in 2000 for the Lake Erie Committee's Coldwater Task Group

Annual Report. Both reports were presented at the Lake Erie Committee Annual Meeting (3/28-29).

Betsy and Mike W. attended the Lake Erie in the Millennium Conference in Windsor, Ontario (3/28-29). Presentations focused on factors regulating energy flow in the food web, habitat issues, aquatic invasives, contaminant processes and the influence of the Detroit River.

INVASIVE SPECIES EVALUATION, EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

Sandra participated in the Giant Salvinia Conference in Houston, TX (3/13-15). The conference consisted of a series of invited speakers followed by break-out sessions to develop a national control plan. Sandra participated in several sessions including the Education and Outreach session which focused on increasing awareness among water users and legislative officials. One of the major action items to be pursued includes development of a feature story to be aired on a major network prime time news show.

Sandra completed the article, *Caulerpa taxifolia: Marine Algal Invader Provokes Quick Response in U.S. Waters* for submission to the Aquatic Nuisance Species Digest published by the Freshwater Foundation. The article is expected to be published in the April 2001 issue.

Sandra worked with Washington Office staff preparing the agenda of the upcoming Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Task Force meeting. Through these efforts, Sandra was able to invite a representative of the State of Hawaii to address the ANS Task Force about invasive marine algae issues in the Pacific Islands.

Sandra continued to assist the *Caulerpa* Prevention Committee. Sandra provided prepared materials for posting on the ANS Task Force web page to update the page to reflect committee activities. Sandra also provided

updates to committee members on the activities and progress in California.

Sandra completed the draft report, *An Action Plan to Prevent the Introduction and Dispersal of the Mediterranean Strain of Caulerpa taxifolia in U.S. Waters*. The document was forwarded to *Caulerpa* Prevention Committee members for a final review prior to submission to the ANS Task Force as a draft. The Plan will be presented to the ANS Task Force at its upcoming meeting in April.

Sandra participated in the Northeast Panel Planning Workshop in Hadley, MA (3/20). Federal and state agency representatives were invited to participate in the planning process to examine the need for and potential role of a Northeast Regional Panel on ANS operating under the authority of the ANS Task Force.

Mike W. forwarded round goby catch data (catch per unit effort, size distribution, trawl coordinates) to Bob Haas of the Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources. The information is to be used in a lake-wide summary of round goby distribution in Lake Erie.

Mike W. conducted Asian clam (*Corbicula fluminea*) surveys at 3 locations along the central Erie Canal between Syracuse and Rochester (3/13). No new sitings of *Corbicula* were made.

Jeff and Mike S. participated in the Great Lakes Research Consortium Student Faculty Conference. (3/16 -17). Their presentations, *Food Web Biomagnification of Persistent Environmental Contaminants Facilitated by the Invading Round Goby* by Jeff and *A GIS-based Model to Predict the Flow-mediated Dispersal of Aquatic Nuisance Species throughout New York State Canal System* by Mike S. outlined proposed thesis activities.

FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (FEDERAL LANDS)

Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (NFARS)

Chris L. completed the threatened and endangered species project report and submitted it to NFARS. All requirements for this project have been completed.

Fort Drum

Chris L. and Jeff continued to work with Fort Drum staff to prepare for this year's fisheries work.

GIS AND DATABASE MANAGEMENT

Chris C. attended the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team GIS/DSS committee meeting in Ann Arbor, MI (3/6-8). The committee continued work on the GIS/DSS Core Group Strategic Plan for Developing Implementation Recommendations.

Chris C. attended the 'Rethinking Niagara' meeting in Thorold, Ontario, Canada (3/13). The project is a bi-national cooperative effort between SUNY-University at Buffalo and the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (Ontario). The project addresses environmental and greenspace issues in the Niagara region.

Chris C. participated in the Region 5 GIS Coordination Team meeting via conference call (3/5). The Region 5 GIS Workshop was evaluated and future goals of the team were discussed.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Intern Anna Kong presented an overview of her proposed field project, *Estimating the American Eel Population in the Niagara River*, to the staff and Frank Pannek (3/26). Mark and recapture methods will be used to estimate populations.

Mike W. continued to assist Hamburg High School intern Kaitlin McCormick with her study of the fish and benthic invertebrate community of Ellicott Creek, NY. Aquatic invertebrates and habitat data were collected, and data is being entered into a GIS for analysis and presentation.

STAFF TRAINING

Chris L. attended Motorboat Operator Instructor Certification Course in Lake Havasu City, AZ (3/25-29). Chris is now a member of the Region 5, MOCC Instructor Team.

Jeff, Mike S, Dan, and Kofi attended the Great Lakes Fishery Commission Lake Erie Committee and Lake Ontario Committee Meetings in Niagara Falls, NY. (3/27-29)

OTHER

Mike W. attended the multi-agency St. Lawrence River Oil Spill Team meeting in Clayton, NY (3/12). Plans were made for team training (early June), as well as for a mock oil spill exercise scheduled for the St. Lawrence River (Clayton area) during September 2001.

This monthly report provides a brief, in-house report on recent activities, issues or events of the Lower Great Lakes Office. Its contents should not be used or cited elsewhere in any way without first contacting our staff. This is to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the information.